No. 21 January 1972

The Journal

of the

Lancashire Dialect Society

Printed for the Society by
Morris & Yeaman (Printers) Ltd.
Manchester M15 5EJ

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EDITORIAL

This issue of the *Journal* contains a contribution of special interest: Mrs. E. Morris's rendering of *The Fair Maid of Ribblesdale*. This is a medieval English lyric and Mrs. Morris describes her version as " an attempt to render (it) freely into a modern dialect idiom ". The original poem, as its first line: " Mosti ryden by Rybbesdale " makes clear, is rooted in the Lancashire region. It is not very often that we can find such precise localisation for English writings of roughly six centuries ago. Mrs. Morris has achieved a lively and convincing poem in current Lancashire dialect. Those who know the original will appreciate the sensitivity of the translation. Translation from earlier stages of the language is far from simple; possibly dialectal modern English may sometimes provide a better medium than Received Standard English, partly because of its greater freedom of syntax, partly because of its local preservation of old vocabulary.

This Society has never confined its interests exclusively to Lancashire dialect, and has always welcomed studies of the dialect of other counties and countries. We are most grateful, therefore, to Dr. Martin Durrell for his article on *The Status of Dialect in Germany*, based on a paper given to members at the meeting held last April. The Society has also wished to foster an interest in occupational dialect—an important field of study which is sometimes neglected. We are therefore very glad to include Mrs. Susan Heaton's account of *The Occupational Dialect of a Blackhall Coal-Miner*.

Members will notice some changes in the List of Officers. After many years of devoted service, Mr. Arnold Hyde has expressed a wish to resign from the office of Chairman. Our heartfelt thanks are due to him for all the hard work which he has put in, cheerfully and modestly, over the years, and we are delighted that he is to continue as a member of the Executive Committee. To our great satisfaction, Mr. H. Hayhurst has generously consented to become the new Chairman, and Mr. H. C. Seeley to become Vice-Chairman.

As a Society grows older, it has, with increasing sadness, to report the death of greatly valued members. Since the last issue of the *Journal*, we have received news of the deaths of Miss M. Crompton, of Manchester, of Mr. Frank Heys, of Rochdale, and of Mrs. Alice Miller, of Oswaldtwistle. Both Miss Crompton and Mr. Heys were long-standing members of the Society who will be greatly missed. Mrs. Miller, a life-member, showed us unfailing generosity and kindness, not least in her many contributions to the *Journal*. The last poem that she sent us appears in this issue. The final sorrow is the recent death of Dr. F. Whitehead, who was a lively member of the Executive Committee and a contributor of first-rate material to

the *Journal*. He and his wife have, throughout, supported the Society enthusiastically and have rarely missed a meeting. We offer our most sincere sympathy to Mrs. Whitehead.

The best tribute we can pay to those who are no longer with us is to keep alive the concern for dialect which they so lovingly fostered.

PROGRAMME FOR 1972

Tuesday, 29th February, 7-30 p.m.

Speaker: The Rev. L. E. H. STEPHENS-HODGE, Rector of Brindle, Chorley.
" Poems of Lincolnshire "
Aperitifs: 6-15 p.m. Dinner: 6-30 p.m.

Thursday, 11th May, 7-30 p.m.

Speaker: Mrs. HILDA KITSON, of Brindle.
" Treasure Trove "
Aperitifs: 6-15 p.m. Dinner: 6-30 p.m.

Tuesday, 17th October, 8 p.m.

Speakers: Members of the EDWIN WAUGH SOCIETY.
Aperitifs: 6-45 p.m. Dinner: 7 p.m.

Tuesday, 5th December

Society's 21st BIRTHDAY DINNER and Members' Evening.
Aperitifs: 6-15 p.m. Dinner: 6-30 p.m.

All the meetings will take place in the Stopford Room of Manchester University. Members who ask to be reminded about meetings will receive a circular before each meeting asking if they wish to have dinner. Other members who wish to attend the dinner should write to the Treasurer about a week before the date of the meeting. Members who do not wish to come to the dinner will be very welcome at the meeting which follows, and for such attendance no notice is necessary.

The Secretary would be pleased to hear from any members who are willing to take part in the entertainment after the 21st Birthday Dinner.

THE STATUS OF DIALECT IN GERMANY

by MARTIN DURRELL, M.A., DR. PHIL., DP. GEN. LING.

It is often still assumed both by German and foreign scholars that the local dialects of the German-speaking countries have been far more tenacious and are far more widely-used than their counterparts in Great Britain or France. Less than a century ago, at the time of the first investigations for Georg Wenker's *Deutscher Sprachatlas*, the native speech of the great majority of Germans was the dialect of their town or village, and in many instances school was the only contact with the " Schriftsprache ", the standard written language, the very name of which clearly shows its originally very limited validity. The current saying that for most German children, German is the first foreign language, had at this time more than a hint of truth; they would learn to read and write the standard, but after leaving school, they would have little cause to speak it except for ceremonial and official purposes. (Zhirmunski, 1963: 100.) Indeed, in its written form it was only finally codified in the early nineteenth century, and before 1898 there was no accepted norm of pronunciation for the standard language, and it had been spoken with more or less pronounced regional variations which may best be termed " accents ". These were in fact so firmly established that the recommendations of the 1898 committee on the " Bühnenaussprache " have never been accepted in their entirety in all German-speaking regions. (Bach, 1965: 353—354 and 401; Moser, 1956: 45; Zhirmunski, 1963: 96—97.) We shall have to return to these variations when we come to consider the regional colloquials.

We must first attempt to ascertain whether local dialects in Germany still enjoy the currency they are often supposed to. For this we shall need to put into perspective the nature of dialect as a language form. In the old-established communities of Western Europe, every settlement of any kind has developed over the centuries a form of speech peculiar to itself; the variations between the speech of one village and that of its neighbour may be small, but the inhabitants are fully aware of these distinctions, and they may be the subject for not always friendly banter. Language is in the final analysis a social convention and plays a large part in the identification of the individual with a particular group. Thus, as dialects are in Western Europe the products of small stable rural communities, it is in such communities that they find their ultimate justification. The degree of variation between dialects seems to vary in direct proportion to the degree of communication. The most striking example of this in Europe is to be found in the Alps: a Swiss German speaker from Zürich will have great difficulty in understanding the German spoken by a farmer from the Valais or the Bernese Oberland. Similarly, the astonishing variety we find in the

dialects of Germany, which is as great as that between the Slavonic languages (Zhirmunski, 1963: 100), has long been attributed to the fragmentation of the Holy Roman Empire into hundreds of small political units and to the effect of the Reformation on these, hindering contact between adjacent Catholic, Lutheran and Calvinist areas. Conversely, the dialects within these territories, where we may assume contacts to have been more extensive, exhibit correspondingly fewer variations. Thus, the existence of greatly varying local speech-forms reflected to a large extent the prevalent social and political conditions in Germany up to the middle of the nineteenth century. They depended on the fact that the great bulk of the population lived in small, relatively stable, introspective, rural communities. The standard form of the written language, such as it was, and the various supra-dialectal colloquials which are attested from the late Middle Ages are exclusively the product of urban or aristocratic society, although they did arise as compromises between various rural forms and were not without effect on the local dialects, especially in Austria. (Kranzmayer, 1955.)

From about the middle of the nineteenth century, however, there occurred a number of far-reaching changes in the social and political structure of the German lands. The long-delayed industrial revolution now advanced at astonishing pace, and the rural population began to flock into the cities, especially to Berlin, which increased in size about twentyfold in the half-century between 1830 and 1880. The population as a whole became much more mobile with the development of communications and was brought more into contact with centralising administrations, especially as primary education and military service became universal. The multitude of tiny states which had made up the Holy Roman Empire had been destroyed in the Napoleonic wars, and the final unification of Germany became the goal of an emergent nationalism. In this aim, which was finally achieved in 1871 in a slightly different manner than most of its original proponents had envisaged, a single and uniform national language was seen as a prior essential. Indeed there were people who saw the existence of local dialects as inimical to this end (Gernentz, 1964: 90), in that they fostered local particularism against the ideal of a unified fatherland. In fact, by the time of unification, the norm of the written language had been more or less stabilised, being finally codified in 1876, and in 1898 came the final fixing of a spoken norm by Theodor Siebs' commission. Unification was thus a precondition for both.

It had thus become necessary for an ever-increasing number of people to have recourse to a mode of speech other than the purely local dialect, which thus ceased to be the only medium of communication even for the rural population. A situation arose in which the great majority of Germans, especially in the South, had at their

disposal at least two forms of speech, or, more typically, a possible range of speech-forms stretching from local dialect to some form of standard. The variety used would depend on the situation and the status of the person spoken to; in the family and more intimate circles the form of speech nearest to dialect would be used, whereas on more formal occasions or when talking to a person from another area, a variant of the standard would be felt more appropriate. Except in Luxembourg, Switzerland and some parts of the North, where, as we shall see, different conditions prevail, one would hesitate to call such usage bilingual, especially as the variation within each speaker's range is often unconscious. We seem rather to have here a clear case of what has recently been termed " diglossia " (Ferguson, 1959), though one may equally well speak of " gradualism ". (Keller, 1961: 200.) As a result of this development, the dialects have become as much an abstraction as the uniform standard at the other end of the linguistic spectrum. That is to say, they have become suffused with supra-regional forms to a greater or lesser degree, even where a fairly pure variant of dialect is still spoken. (Henzen, 1954: 19 and 209; Rosenkranz, 1963: 17; Kufner, 1957: 11; Debus, 1963; Möhn, 1963; Debus, 1962.) " Pure " dialect, the original speech-form of closed rural communities, has not survived the coming of mass-communications and a new industrial technology which uses the standard exclusively. However, perhaps one should not over-emphasise the effect of communications on the spoken forms of the dialects. Apart from the infiltration of some particular forms into local speech, these presuppose only a passive knowledge of the standard language and do not demand an active command of it. This is especially the case where little prestige attaches to the spoken, " correct " form of the standard, as is to a large extent the case in South Germany, especially in Bavaria and Austria, where regional loyalties show every sign of surviving unification.

On the other hand, active communication with speakers from another area will call for a form of speech closer to the standard. As we have seen, this has only been necessary to any degree in the last hundred years, and even up to the last war it was perhaps an exception for most of the rural population, at least. However, the defeat of Nazi Germany and the provisions of the Potsdam agreement brought sixteen million Germans from the former territories East of the Oder-Neisse line and from Bohemia and Moravia into the occupied zones of Germany. The effect of this influx was to alter radically the structure of the population in every community of the remaining German lands; nearly a quarter of the population was now made up of refugees and expellees, and of necessity these latter were first quartered in rural areas where they could be provided for to a certain extent. Even in 1965 the most rural of the German provinces, Schleswig-Holstein and Lower Saxony, have a population

comprised of at least a third of persons born in the Eastern territories. It is not easy to gauge at such a short distance the effect this enormous influx has had on the native dialects of the present German states, although it is quite clear that it has finally destroyed completely the original stability of the rural population, which we recognised as a primary condition for the formation and retention of original local speech-forms. It is possible, however, to make a few general statements about the effect of this new population. First and foremost, far more people than ever before found it necessary or desirable to have some recourse to more standard forms of speech, and the hold of the standard language was strengthened immeasurably. As the expellees assimilated into their new homes, their own dialects (if they indeed still spoke one, as most town-dwellers and Germans from the far North-East did not), were soon given up, except possibly within the narrow confines of the family, and they began to use the speech-forms most current in the area in which they had come to live. Unless the dialect was still pretty well the only usual means of comunication, and close to their own native dialect (as would be the case with Bohemian Germans in Bavaria) this tended to be the regional colloquial. Expellees who had not normally spoken dialect previously, however, scarcely ever found it necessary or desirable to acquire the dialect of their new homes. (Leopold, 1959: 145—148; Spangenberg, 1963: 64—65; Moser, 1956: 48—49.) The same observations are even more true of the children of the expellees. Children, with strong group feelings, are characteristically intolerant of aberrant speech-forms, and any compromises have tended to be in the direction of standard. However, observations have shown the situation to be extremely complex; there are differences from region to region in the amount of dialect still spoken and cases have been noted where different primary school classes have different speech-forms, i.e., where a majority are from dialect-speaking homes, dialect will be the form used even by those children who would not normally speak High German at home. For a long time it was not unusual to find children who speak an expellee dialect at home, the local dialect with the other inhabitants of the village and a regional form of standard with their classmates. (Spangenberg, 1963:65.) Sex, too, seems to play a part in the language form spoken; it has often been observed that girls are far more ready to abandon dialect than boys. (Spangenberg, 1963: 68; Keller, 1961: 300.)

The situation, then, is that with the unification of the country and the exclusive use of the standard as a national medium of communication and with the destruction of old stable rural communities through industrialisation, the greater mobility of the population and the enormous influx of refugees after 1945, the dialects are very much in retreat, and some form of standard is becoming the native language of far more Germans than has ever

been the case before. However, as will have been made clear through the necessity of qualifying some earlier observations by reference to regional distinctions, this process is by no means uniform throughout the present German-speaking areas, and indeed the form of standard adopted in any particular area still tends to owe a great deal to the local dialect, although the extent of this influence also varies considerably from region to region, for various complex reasons. These forms are in Germany generally termed " Umgangssprachen ", which I have rendered as " regional colloquials ". Their parallels in England, in the amount of diversity they show, are perhaps not so much the forms of standard RP which one would perhaps call " acceptable regional pronunciations ", but the once-despised regional " accents ", which derive to some extent from the old rural dialects, and which, to judge by the number of undergraduates in our own department who now seem to speak them without any degree of embarrassment or censure as their natural form of speech, appear to be attaining a degree of social acceptability similar to the regional colloquials in Germany. But in Germany perhaps far more than in England we find the gradualism of which we spoke earlier, and there is much variation between the two ideal extremes of " pure " standard and " pure " dialect. Only in the past twenty years have German scholars turned to any extent from the traditional study of either the standard or the rural dialects to a consideration of these intermediate forms. (Rosenkranz, 1963; Bach, 1965: 425—428; Cordes, 1963; Pilch, 1966; Moser, 1956 and 1960; Maurer, 1956; Henzen, 1954.) Indeed, for a long time they were held in contempt as " impure " or " bastard " growths, unworthy of serious attention. A more balanced view has now come to prevail, with the realisation that they are the natural form of speech for the majority of the population, although any general statement about their nature must be qualified, as a large amount of research still needs to be done on their various regional forms and developments, and on their position within the language community as a whole.

These qualifications apply most strongly to the study of their developing relationship to the rural dialects and to the standard. Here two conflicting views prevail at the moment. Some scholars see the colloquials as natural developments within a particular region, as compromise forms arising from contacts between inhabitants from different parts of the region, probably in the regional capital or the large market towns, with a corresponding loss of purely local features but with the retention of features common to all the dialects of the area. From their status as supra-regional forms they may be closer to the standard and would be liable to influences from it, especially as they will have pretentions to a certain wider validity and are used in communicating with outsiders.

It is in such cases that one may observe most clearly the emergence of the gradualism which we have seen as characteristic of much of the linguistic situation in Germany. On the other hand, some scholars stress in the emergence of the colloquials their derivation from the conflict between dialect and an already-formed standard. Native dialect speakers will, in their attempt to speak standard, naturally still use the linguistic habits of their native form of speech, and thus the colloquials will retain characteristic phonological, morphological, syntactical or lexical features of the dialect to a greater or lesser extent. Again the result would be a kaleidoscope effect, with the emergence of many varied forms between " pure " dialect and " pure " standard, and the dialect would in effect be a substratum in the colloquial. (Moser, 1960:220; Moser, 1956: 51—53; Möhn, 1963: 156—161; Henzen, 1954: 20—21; Zhirmunski, 1963: 108.)

However, the situation may be even more complex, for the colloquials may well contain elements of organic regional compromise forms *and* of attempts by dialect-speakers to come to terms with the national standard. What is more, there are many variations from region to region both in the amount of dialect spoken and the nature of the relationship between the dialect and the colloquial. It would therefore seem most appropriate to give a brief outline of the situation in each of the larger regions before coming to a final judgment on the present status of dialect in the German-speaking countries.

The situation is possibly simplest in the Low German speech area of the North. These dialects are in their whole structure probably the furthest removed from standard High German. They are, in fact, much closer to standard Dutch, though the latter would never come into consideration as a standard language for the Low German speech-area. Low German had a more or less uniform written language in the late Middle Ages, which was used as the business language of the Hanseatic League, and thus had an enormous influence on the modern Scandinavian tongues. However, with the downfall of the League and the loss in importance of the Baltic trade after 1550 High German became the written language for North Germany, too, although moderately successful attempts were made to revive written Low German in the nineteenth century. But already by this time the upper and middle classes in the towns had turned to High German as a spoken form, and Low German was no longer a language in the sense that High German (or French or English) is, with a standard form and divergent dialects, but a collective name for a group of dialects within Germany. (Gernentz, 1964:77.) What interests us here initially is the spoken form of High German which was used in the urban areas from the late eighteenth century onwards. Although documentation is of course scanty, it

seems clear that this was not a compromise supra-regional form, but at first a conscious attempt by native dialect-speakers to speak High German, and the substratum of the native Low German showed through more or less clearly. This is a result of the distance between Low and High German, which would preclude the emergence of gradual stages between dialect or a dialect-based colloquial such as seems to have existed in some of the towns and standard High German. This " Missingsch ", as it is called at least in Hamburg and Mecklenburg, slowly percolated down the social scale in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, as the lower classes became aware of the prestige of the standard. There was of course great variation in the extent of dialect features in " Missingsch ", but, because of its pretentions to standard and the clear distinction between standard and Low German dialect, it has always been a most unstable form. As a result, the non-standard elements in it tended to be slowly lost as generations grew up without a knowledge of the dialect and because the example of the written standard was always present. Thus there arose in North Germany what was in effect a form of colloquial based at least in its phonology on the spelling pronunciation of what was initially a totally unfamiliar language. As it happened, the phonology of the Low German dialects could be used quite satisfactorily to read the written form of High German, and in fact they were more satisfactory in this respect than most High German dialects or regional colloquials, many of which have lost the distinction between rounded and unrounded front vowels (/y, œ/—/i, e/) and between voiced and unvoiced stops (/b, d, g/—/p, t, k/) which are primary in the graphemic system of High German. This very correct North German pronunciation, which soon replaced " Missingsch " in the upper part of the social scale, became recognised in the course of the nineteenth century as exemplary, and most features of it were taken as a basis for the codification of stage pronunciation by Siebs' commission in 1898, which confirmed a development which had already been generally accepted. (Gernentz, 1964: 127—133; Zhirmunski, 1963: 97—98.) The spoken colloquial of North Germany was thus given a certain authoritative status and prestige. Possibly as a result the Low German dialects, which the speakers could not identify at all with the standard, became associated with linguistic and social inferiority in a way not characteristic of any of the High German speech areas at such an early date. The shift from dialect which we have explained above in general terms became a rout in North Germany. If Low German is still spoken, it is only in the remoter rural communities; its strongholds are the fishing villages of Schleswig-Holstein and the marsh and fen country between the Elbe and the Dutch border. But even here it is in full retreat, though statistics are often unreliable (Gernentz, 1964: 158—160.) One curiosity is that a knowledge of the Low German dialect is often denied; it is a speech-form in which no

pride is taken. A similar situation often obtains where the rural language is not the national language of the country—with the Slovenes in Carinthia or the German dialect speakers in Alsace, where the dialect has become almost a private language, not for the ears of outsiders. But more than anything this situation is typical where the dialect is regarded as something inferior or unworthy. In the Northern parts of East Germany there appears to have been a similar wholesale retreat from Low German. In 1960, only 20 per cent of schoolchildren in randomly selected rural areas still actively spoke Low German, even on the isolated island of Rügen. (Gernentz, 1964: 149.) A comparison of a small North German town (Northeim, South of Hanover) with a South German town of comparable size undertaken in 1958 produced what we may see as typical results. In Northeim less than 10 per cent of schoolchildren in the town itself and 20 per cent in the surrounding rural areas spoke Low German, whereas the figures in Bamberg for the local East Franconian dialect were 50 per cent for the town and 80 per cent for the rural areas. (Leopold, 1959: 148—150.) Here, the children of refugees had learnt dialect, a situation rarely obtaining in North Germany. Low German has become associated with a backward rural population, and the colloquial of most of the population is now High German with a certain number of characteristically Low German features, especially in the syntax and vocabulary. "Missingsch" is disappearing, too, as the native dialect speakers which were essential to its existence decline in number.

The situation in Central and Upper Germany is totally different, although here too the dialects are in retreat. But the standard arose from these dialects, in particular those of the East and South-East, and a certain association is still possible in most cases between the dialect and the standard. Thus, with some exceptions, the gradualism we defined earlier is characteristic of these areas, and we find many variations between dialect, regional colloquial and standard, with the speech of the majority of the population varying between the extremes according to the situation and the person spoken to. In fact, it is frequently difficult to say whether a speaker is using dialect or regional colloquial, and he himself may be under the impression of speaking standard. Any decision will be based on a set of quite arbitrary criteria. Broadly speaking, rural speech tends still to have more dialect features than urban speech, though the colloquials of many have features peculiar to themselves, found neither in the standard nor in the speech of the surrounding rural areas. However, as a general rule, it is the urban colloquials which are closer to standard, and they appear to have arisen at least initially as compromise forms between the rural dialects of the surrounding areas and not as the conscious effort of dialect speakers to speak standard, as was the case in North Germany. With the enormous growth in importance of the towns in

the last hundred years these forms of speech have become more widespread; if rural dialects are given up or modified in any way, the direction of movement tends to be initially towards the prevalent colloquial of the regional centre, if one exists, rather than towards the standard. This is especially the case if there are still strong feelings of regional affinity, as particularly in Bavaria and Austria, where dialect features are found much higher up the social and linguistic scale than in most other German-speaking areas. Dialect as such is still relatively strong only in the remoter rural areas, but colloquial features are infiltrating it more and more. (Debus, 1963; Möhn, 1963; Henzen, 1954:19; Rosenkranz, 1963:17.) Often the purely local dialect is regarded as old-fashioned, with the result that what is in fact a shift in speech-form is seen by the rural population as a difference between generations, the newer colloquial forms being taken for dialect to a certain extent. Thus, the dialects are retreating in these areas, too, but they are replaced initially by forms of the colloquial. This of course does not preclude the possibility of the individual speaker also being capable of using forms nearer the standard if the need arises. The origin of these colloquials in Southern and Central Germany as compromise forms within a particular area thus seems to be confirmed, and in fact their existence is attested comparatively early, in some cases as far back as the sixteenth century. (Moser, 1960:219; Moser, 1956:41; Bach, 1965:428; Rosenkranz, 1963: 12—13; Kranzmayer, 1955:265.) However, one frequently finds further compromises between the colloquial and the standard, which give one the impression that some colloquials may have the same origin as in North Germany, i.e. they are standard forms spoken with the phonemes of the dialect. For example, the rounded front vowels of standard German are found in Bavarian only as products of the vocalisation of /l/, but in the Munich colloquial they are often reintroduced in those environments where they are found in the written standard. (Kufner, 1957.) This exemplifies an important further development of the regional colloquials in the direction of standard. The latter were dialect-based in that they retained the underlying phonological and grammatical structure of the dialects whilst abandoning purely local or secondary features. Thus, the Swabian colloquial replaces the secondary diphthongs found in certain parts of Swabia, /ao/ and /ae/, by the long vowels /o:/ and /e:/, a change which brings it into agreement with most other areas but which does not affect the sound-structure of the dialects; it is a purely phonetic change. On the other hand the phonemic distinction between /ai/ and /əi/, /au/ and /əu/, which is characteristic of all Swabian dialects but is not found in the standard, is maintained in the Swabian colloquial. What seems to be happening at the moment is that in some advanced colloquial speech such primary distinctions are being given up on occasions, and a compromise is being made towards the structure of the standard language,

with occasional dialect-derived phonetic differences in the realisation of the phonemes of the standard language. (Kufner, 1957.) This is the situation we found in North Germany, where the written symbols of High German were interpreted with dialect phonemes; at the present it is only a slow trend in Southern and Central Germany, though it may well be a pointer to the future, especially as the colloquials do have certain pretentions to a quasi-standard validity.

There are a few exceptions to this picture of the language situation in the High German speech areas which would seem worthy of mention. For instance, there appear to be some areas where no regional colloquial has developed, especially where there are no large towns to act as catalysts. It is in these areas where the original dialect is normally strongest, especially in the hill areas of Hesse, the Palatinate, the central parts of the Black Forest, and Southern Thuringia. However, a recently undertaken survey in Western Thuringia, which is in a very similar position, has shown the dialect to be in full retreat before a version of standard spoken with dialect phonemes, such as we found in North Germany. In one particular village (Unterellen), which in 1940 was purely dialect speaking, barely a third of the schoolchildren could speak dialect in 1960. (Spangenberg, 1963.) What appears to have happened is that there has been a conscious abandonment of dialect as a family language; the parents, even if they speak dialect to one another, are bringing their children up to speak High German exclusively. This can only be the result of a similar psychological shift to that which happened in North Germany: the dialect has become associated with linguistic and social inferiority to such an extent that it is seen as a handicap for the children. This is of course not the case where gradualism is prevalent at all levels of society or where there are strong regional ties, as on the Middle Rhine, or more especially in Bavaria, but it would point to the possibility of similar such developments in comparable areas of West Germany, though in my own experience dialect is still strong in such cases.

The further exception to the general pattern is provided by the German dialects of two areas lying outside Germany proper: in Switzerland and Luxembourg. Here dialect is still the native speech-form for the whole population, and the standard is used exclusively as a written medium or for talking to outsiders. (Zinsli, 1956; Keller, 1961: 30—31 and 248—249.) It is even used on formal occasions, in the federal or cantonal parliaments and in learned discussions, a situation which has been denigrated by some scholars who try to identify dialect too closely with the " Volkssprache ", the language of the people and the repository of solid peasant virtues. They do not like to see what they consider to be matter better fitted to the pale and artificial standard couched in what they

regard as the more vital form of dialect, especially if it means the wholesale transference of abstract or learned vocabulary or constructions into dialect form. (Henzen, 1954: 190—193.) But this attitude seems to derive more from a nostalgia for the old unspoiled rural life than from a clear view of the place of dialect in modern Swiss life. In effect, the Swiss and Luxembourg dialects have become the outward expression of political diversity; a century ago it seemed as if the Swiss dialects were being eroded in the same way as those of Germany, but since 1918 and especially since 1933 there has been a conscious turning away from spoken standard German. (Zinsli, 1956: 64—65.) Contemporaneously there were efforts to create acceptable written forms of the dialects in both Luxembourg and Switzerland; both were unsuccessful, and although we still find written Letzeburgisch being used, especially in primary schools, it has a shadowy existence next to the two other national languages, French and High German. But these attempts are in themselves typical of the wish for some expression of the political diversity, a wish which has led to the dialects being used in all possible speech situations. It is probably only in such contexts that the dialects can be adapted to use in the changing structure of society, and it will be clear just how exceptional these cases are. On the other hand, these changes of which we spoke earlier have had a certain effect even in Switzerland and Luxembourg, for we find increasingly that Swiss and Luxembourg colloquials are emerging, with characteristic levelling between competing forms and the elimination of local peculiarities, especially in the Swiss Alpine areas and the Luxembourg Ardennes, where the dialects are furthest removed from those of the main population centres. These colloquials are characteristically based on the speech forms of the cities, as in South Germany, where speakers from many areas congregate, though with the marked difference that there is little further compromise towards standard, except possibly in matters of vocabulary, where a standard word can easily infiltrate into the speech through the printed word. But the future of the dialects in these countries seems far more assured than in either West or East Germany or even Austria. (Zinsli, 1956:71.)

Thus we see that, contrary to the commonly held assumptions we mentioned initially, the present status of dialect in Germany is not unlike that in England. With the decline of rural society the dialects have lost their *raison d'être* and have ceased to be the native speech form for the greater part of the community. They are being replaced by colloquial forms which may still owe a great deal to the original dialects, more as one progresses from North to South, but which aim ultimately at being an approximation of the standard language. This development may be slowed down considerably by feelings of regional loyalty, and we have seen the extreme form of this situation in Switzerland and Luxembourg. But for most of the

present generation some form of the High German standard is a native mother-tongue in a way it never was for its parents or grandparents. With this, the fate of the dialects seems decided.

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READY FER OFF

by EDITH COLLISON

Ah'm ready fer off when Ah corn'd get up th' hill,
When nowt's i' a day only ceawerin' still,
When t' looad's getten heavy, an' journeyin's o'er,
An' life's bod a passin' Ah'll watch fro mi door.

Ah'm ready fer off when Ah corn'd hear t' sweet song
O' th' ousels i' matin', an' sheps i' a throng,
Nay, nobbut a spadger, Ah'm fain t' be theer
If thanks fer a crumb's bod a chirp i' mi ear.

Ah'm ready fer off when Ah corn'd look at t' sky
Wi' raggy gret cleawds as go scutherin' by,
An' t' sunleet, then t' moon like a lanthern aglow—
As lief be spark eawt if Ah corn'd see id so.

Ah love every furrow an' stride o' eawr land,
Each moment o' livin', an' aw as He's planned,
Ah'm preawd o' mi strength—when Tha teks id away
Dear Lord, mek me patient till th' end o' mi day.

THE FAIR MAID OF RIBBLESDALE

by ELIZABETH MORRIS

In an owd buke Ah read a tale
Of a lad as roamed i' Ribblesdale
  A lass to find f'r'issel'.
Have the bonniest lass he would
That e'er were made o' flesh an' blood
  Fro' a' that up theer dwell.
Like sunbeams her face were bright
An' a' around hoo spread a light—
  Or this is what they tell—
Wi' gowden thread hoo tied her hair,
Like a lily hoo were tall an' fair,
  An' rich rose red as well.

" When Ah'm luking at her head
It seems to me " so this lad said,
  " Like—sunshine at mid-day.
A laughing glance hoo sent to me,
Her very eyebrows bent to me—
  Her eyes are gret and grey.
Heaven's moon as shines at night
Canna outshine wi' its light
  Her forred's glow in t'day.
Dosta wonder if it grieve me—
Will hoo, would hoo, ever leave me?
  Death'll be the day.

" Hoo has eyebrows arched on high,
White between and noan too nigh—
  Luv teases me to death—
Life is luvsome to her yet.
Delicate her nose is set,
  Sweet as spice her breath.
Luvly are her locks and long,
Hoo scatters laughter a' among
  Whoever hoo might tread.
Her chin is delicate an' white,
Her cheeks beside are rosy quite
  As roses when they're red.

" Hoo has lips so grand and true—
If that red mouth should speak to you—
  Romances for to read.
Her teeth are white as a whale boan,
More neat an' even are there noan,
  As th' highest born mun heed;

Her neck as dainty as a swan's,
More elegant than anyone's,
  A sight sore eyes to feed.
Ah'd sooner wait an' watch her come
Than be Pope an' ride i' Rome,
  So brave upon his steed.

" When Ah luke upon her hand,
Of a't'lily-white leaves in t' land,
  T'brightest might it be—
Her face so fragrant is, and tender,
Her arms so long are, and so slender,
  Her skin like ivory;
Hoo has fingers fair to fold;
If Ah might only have and hold—
  All t'world were well with me.
Her breasts beneath t'linen bodice
Are twin apples of Paradise,
  As thou thisel' could see.

" Her girdle o' beaten gold is placed
All around her little waist.
  Hanging to her toe
Are such rubies on a string
Intricate wi' such carving
  And emeralds also.
T'buckle's made of ivory boan,
And in it set a magic stoan
  That rescues men from woe;
Water into wine to drink
They say it changes—and Ah think
  Who's seen it ought to know.

" Hoo has a waist so neat and slender,
And the virgin pheonix's splendour
  Below it and above.
All her flesh is soft as silk,
Whiter than the morning milk—
  But cheeks that blush like luv.
All the rest that Ah've not said
Is as wonderfully made
  As all Ah've towd thee of.
Christ might say: if thou'd a mind
Summat o' heaven some nights to find
  Heaven's in her luv."

THE OCCUPATIONAL DIALECT OF A BLACKHALL COAL-MINER

by SUSAN HEATON, B.A.

Coal mining is the main industry of many villages in South-East Durham. Although coal-mining activities are slowly declining, a distinct occupational dialect can nevertheless be discerned. As a subject for research I chose a retired miner who had worked in Blackhall Colliery for fifty-one years. Having begun work in the coal-mine at the age of fourteen, he had many recollections of coal miners' terms, or, as they are known locally, *pitmatic*. This word is also used to describe the pronunciation of coal-miners. I approached the subject by asking the miner to describe, as fully as he could recall, a normal working day.

If he was on the first shift, which began at 3 a.m., he needed somebody to wake him by knocking on his door. This would be the *knockerupper*. When it was time to go out, he dressed himself in his pit clothes which would be warming by the fender.

First of all, he would put on his *hoggers* or underpants. These are navy blue shorts. Before modern coal-mining techniques were evolved, coal-mining was largely done by hand. Consequently the very hot work often made it necessary for a coal miner to strip down to his hoggers. In the English Dialect Dictionary *hoggers* is not recorded in this sense. The word is there defined as a stocking with the foot cut off, used as a gaiter. The coal hewer formerly wore his stockings with the feet cut off, so that when small coals got into the stocking foot, he had only to pull off this and not the whole stocking. It may be that *hoggers* is derived from *huggers*, and the idea is that the shorts or stockings hug the legs.

On top of his hoggers the miner wore a pair of fustian trousers. Having put on his leather waistcoat, pit vest and jacket, he completed his dressing by pulling on his stockings and boots (widely pronounced [biəts]). Finally he donned his slush cap, a cloth cap which was worn before the general use of steel helmets.

Next his wife would make some sandwiches for him, which he took to work with a bottle of water. *Bait* is the miners' term for the snack which they take down the pit. The corresponding Yorkshire term is *snap*. Nowadays plastic containers have replaced the old *bait pokes*. These were calico bags into which the food was placed.

Arrived at the pit head or *heapstead*, a group of miners would be ready to descend the pit shaft. Someone would *rap for men on*. This expression is commonly used today, although it is derived from an obsolete practice. In former times, in order to signal the cage to ascend, a miner would lift and drop a lever, like someone rapping

on a door. Today, push-button signalling has replaced this practice but the expression remains. *To rap men on* means to signal that there are some men at the surface who are ready to descend and start work. *To rap the cage away* is the expression used when a miner wants to return to the surface at the end of a shift.

A *deputy* is the miner in charge of a working district. A miner's first call before starting work is at the deputy's *kist*. This is a small hollowing in the side of a tunnel used by the deputy. The word may be derived from Old Norse *kista*, meaning " chest ". It is easy to see how *kist* can come to mean a small confined place. Here the safety lamps are double-checked and, if a man has a faulty one, he is sent immediately *to bank*. That is, he is sent back to the surface. Everything having been checked, the miner proceeds *in-bye*, which means that he travels towards the coal-face.

My subject had been a *putter* in the pit. That is, he took empty coal trucks which he called *chummens*, drawn by a pit pony or [galəwə] to the coal face and led the full tubs back to the shaft bottom. The word [galəwə] is applied to pit ponies because they came originally from Galloway in Scotland.

At the coal-face there was *bargain work*, which consisted in cutting the coal with an axe known as a *hardy-ack* and drilling holes for explosives. The word used for cutting the coal was *curving* and this is a variant of the standard English verb *carve*.

The expression used for working the seams of coal was *to split the pillars*. A pillar is a vertical seam of coal. At the coal face there may be, for example, six pillars, and the last to be worked or *drove* was known as the *stook*. It is interesting that this word, more familiarly associated with farming, has a special application in the language of coal-miners.

On returning to the bottom of the pit shaft with a load of full tubs, the putter *raps the set away*; that is, he signals for the cage to descend so that the tubs can be sent to the surface.

Taking full tubs up an incline can be a dangerous job. In order to prevent accidents, a number of safety devices are used. For example, a *bull* is the name given to a piece of iron which is attached to the roof and drops on to the track after the tubs have passed. If the tubs go out of control, or *run amain*, they merely *up-end*, that is, they knock into each other and buckle, because the bull acts as a buffer.

There are also *cows* in the mine. This is the name given to the iron shackle attaching one tub to another. *Dogs* and *monkeys* are also found; these are gadgets used in securing various items of machinery in the pit. Another safety procedure is *dregging up*. This

entails putting a piece of wood behind the wheels of a stationary tub in order to prevent it rolling backwards down an incline.

When it is time for a break for food, the miner says to his workmate [marə]: " Marrer, it's bait-time ". *Bait* was usually eaten while the miner was crouched on his haunches, because of the low roof. The widespread expression for this practice is *on his unkers*. It is not uncommon to see the older miners in the summer sitting on their unkers near their house.

Louse [lauz] is the expression used for the end of a shift. In the E.D.D. *louse* is not recorded as a noun in this sense, although it is recorded as a verb, meaning " to cease ? ". The miner returns home to ask his wife " What's for today ? " in other words " What is there to eat ? " He will probably either comment " Nothing's gone right " [nauts gɔn rit] or that everything is going well [its diən wil].

This account was a reminiscence and therefore may give the impression of belonging to the old mining days. In fact, most of the terms used are current today.

BI SHOE OR CLOG

by W. COOKE

The wind in the dale is blowin' to fair,
The maidens o' Ross are takin' the air,
Moonlight is stalkin' the moor an' the bog,
Wi' mony a lad, awake an' agog.

Trees an' the heather are slakin' the breeze,
An' mony a skirt is flowin' wi' ease;
So where could be found a nimbler jog,
Than love o' lovers, bi shoe or bi clog?

GENTIAN BLUE

by the late ALICE MILLER

Mrs. Miller wished to dedicate this poem to Elisabeth Brockbank, of Yealand Conyers, " who portrayed natural earth colour and who was a great lover of Northern characters. Her skill as a distinctive miniaturist placed her in the rank of a genius ".

Tha never thowt, quate Yealand lass
As genius clung to thee:
Thad quality uv inner gifts
As coom sa swift, sa free!
Fer in an' eawt thi ev'ry day
An monny a looansum neet
Fine imiges rushed through thi mind;
Sthretched wings to lift thi feet.

Ah shud hev towd tha this afooar
Tha put thi last brush deawn;
An' gi'n tha mooar thi 'eart craved for
To reych thi magic creawn:
It's daft-like bawkin' eawt to-day
Fer things as cheeoned us fast;
Since tha hes left thi messiges
Fer such as me . . . to last.

Blue gentians on wide winda sill,
Lavinther a-dhryin';
Japonica ageeon grey wa',
Near 'oneysuckle lyin'!
Int th'early months t' wee peerin' buds . . .
T' fost promise, pure, serene,
Showed grace o' snowdhrops, frail yet sthrong;
Aye, luvs fer ev'ry queen!

Nowt nobbut colour ev'rywheer,
Wi' Ingleborough lapped
In thad lime-speckled shawl id weeors
Afooar it's winther-capped:
Here's wheer Ah laarned wod shaddas did,
An' heaw t' sun changed ther hue—
Aspecially when tha teyched wi' een
Ah chrissund Gentian Blue!

Thy Studio an' thy visions copped
Much as wer born in me;
Leet fer a gradely way to gooa
Breathlus on Lunetide sea;
Ah conna tell wod Ah would ca'
Thad hooamplace as Ah knew . . .
Anuf fer me a wooin' thrush;
Thisel . . . mi Gentian Blue!

Note. When Mrs. Miller sent us this poem, she added, in a letter, the following comment:

"I became linked in her life and destiny in 1939 through M. Penelope Hall, who was Organizer of the Oswaldtwistle Social Service Club and a fine worker among the 'unfortunates' of that period. Elisabeth Brockbank inaugurated the Yealand Art Group, and discovered much talent of value and service—beginning with unskilled youngsters. I reported meetings, exhibitions and book publishing, etc. She was a great sufferer—painting much of her intricate work with swollen hands, joints, and constant pain. Just before her death she drew the 'singing thrush' and requested I should accept the block and use it in constant remembrance of our lovely friendship. After her passing the Y.A.G. became the Carnforth Art Centre."

Mrs. Miller did indeed make use of the bequest of the "singing thrush". A small print of this charming bird was pasted, as an emblem, on every letter and contribution that she sent to us.—*Editor.*

TH' WATTER-BED

by EDITH COLLISON

Tommy Taylor, an' their Jane an' Ann, lived i' Long Row—nowt special abeawt t' place, bar t' stairs. Ah've ne'er sin a set as twisty an' narrer, wi' every risin' a size o' ids own. Chap as med 'em mun ha' bin bang-happy wi' his hommer an' ne'er heed th' inches, an' Ah bet he'd lost his two-foot. Them stairs come i' mi tale.

Tommy, bein' t' mon o' t' family, wur waited on, hond an' foot. But Jane wur t' boss an' battler agen t' world fer t' three on 'em. If Jane oppen't t' dooar, fooak eawtside took their hook i' quick-sticks—beggars, tinkers, sellers—aw t' lot. But Ann, little drawer-in at t' fact'ry as hoo'd bin—a gipsy hed nobbut to show t' babby under her shawl, an' Ann wur landed wi' pegs, an' lace, an' paper fleawrs. Hoo loved them fleawrs. Hoo'd fix 'em i' a vawse on t' winder-sill, an' coo o'er 'em same as a little lass wi' a new doll,—till Jane come in an' shifted 'em an' put th' aspidester back.

One day, when Tommy hed bin i' bed a bit—nowt serious—Docther sed as he mun hev a lie on a watter-bed, as his back wur sore wi' t' flocks i' lumps. Docther gi'e Jane a paper fer t' lads next dooar to fotch one o' the beds, an' he towd Jane to fill it wi' warm watter.

"Aye, Ah know", sed Jane.

They set abeawt fillin' t' weshin-boiler, beatin' t' feighre under id, an' layin' papper o'er t' flooar. When t' bed wur unrowlt, Jane geet a tundish in t' hoyle, teem't t' hot watter in an' med t' plug fast.

"Ah'll go fust so as Ah con mind t' steps", sed Jane, "an' tha mun stick howd o' t' corners, an' shove t' bed up as tha comes."

Tommy wur groanin' an' co'in on 'em to be sharp, as he wur beawn to dee if they hung abeawt much longer.

"Ah'm i' mortal pain", he sheawted.

"Thi voice seawnds awreet", sed Jane. "Shove id up, Ann", an' they wur on t' way. Another do, an' up they went agen.

"Howd on!" cried Ann, seawndin' a bit smothert. "Corn'd we keep t' bed mooar o' a level?"

"Tha little gobbin!" sed Jane. "Watter'll no' ston' still. Think on abeawt Blackpoo', an' thee, when tha went a-paddlin' fer thi corn, an' t' watter splattert aw up thi—."

"Jane!" cried Ann, sharpish. "Mind eawr Tommy's ears! Let's ged on."

After a toathri mooar poos an' shoves, they landed at t' bend in t' stairs.

" Jane! " come a co' fro' th' invalid. " Wilta reytch me a pill? "

" Eawr Tommy," an' it wur Jane's best bossy voice, " wilta be reasonable? Me an' eawr Ann's thrutchin' an' sweatin' wi' thi new bed, an' we mornd leeave howd till we've getten atop o' t' stairs. We're on t' road."

"Ah'll dee afore tha—."

" Ged on wi' thi deein' then. Come on, Ann."

They did another step up. A roar an' a crash come fro' above.

" What's to do? " they axt.

" Mi pill rowlt under t' bed, an' —."

"Aye, an' tha's gone after id ", sed Jane, grim-like.

" We're comin'. Up agen, Ann."

"Ah'm stuck. Ah'll dee under t' bed."

"Awk'ard place to lay thee eawt. Shove id up, Ann."

Th'owd bull i' Balshaw's fielt ne-er gi'e a madder roar nor that as Tommy let eawt.

" Lord, help us! " cries Jane, clappin' her honds o'er her ears, an' t' bed slithers deawn wi' a gugglin' seawnd, flooars Ann, an' settles atop on her.

" Jane! " sheawts Tommy fro' his prison under t' bed. A faint cry comes fro' t' heeavin' blob at t' bottom o' t' stairs.

" Lord, help us! " an' this time hoo means id, fer Jane hersel's i' trouble. Hoo starts up fer Tommy's room, when id comes to her as Ann's i' wor' fettle nor Tommy, so hoo scuttles deawn an' poos Ann eawt, aw winded an' pantin'.

" Jane, wilta come? Ah'm catchin mi deeath o' cowd."

" Eawr Tommy, howd thi husht! Tha's getten enoo' o' breath to skeer t' brids off t' roof, an' eawr Ann's welly nigh flattent eawt. Poo t' bedcover off, an' lap id reawnd thee. Tha'll tek no harm till Ah come."

" Wod's to-do wi' eawr Ann? "

" Thi new bed's beawlt her o'er, an' hoo's a bit poorly. Gi'e o'er co'in! "

It wurn't long afore things wur put reet, an' t' place come quiet agen. They'd aw hed a cup o' tay wi' a drop o' strengthener in id, eawt o' t' bottle off t' top shelf. Tommy wur back i' bed, warm an'

comfortable. wi' t' pill safely in t' reet place. Lapped i' Jane's shawl, Ann rested in t' best cheear bi t' feighre. An' t' cat wur back. Jane hed lugged t' bed to t' back dooar, getten a stiff brush, undone t' plug, an' gi'en t' flags a good do wi' t' watter as flooded eawt.

At last, hoo set hersel' deawn, an' geet her knittin' gooin'. Neaw an' then hoo took a look o'er her specteckles at Ann, pale an' fagged-lookin', lyin back as if hoo wur asleep. After a bit, Jane sed, as if tellin' hersel' summat, "Ah'll nip across an' ax eawr Joe if he'll gi'e us a lift wi't' bed, when he's hed a bite".

Ann opent her een.

" Jane? " hoo whispers.

" Wod is id, love? " an' fer once, Jane's voice wur soft an' gentle.

" Ah've bin thinkin ", sed Ann. " Couldn't we ha' fillt t' bed up i' Tommy's room? "

CURE FER A COWD

by W. COOKE

Tak' a quart o' cool spring wather,
Boil id til tha's but a quather,
Stan' id in the mornin' sun
A week before thi cowd's begun.
When between thi sheets tha'rt lyin',
An' tha feels thi soul is flyin',
Pop beside thi bed, a cup;
An hour before tha wakkens, sup!

VOCABULARY AND IDIOM PECULIAR TO THE ASHTON IN MAKERFIELD AREA

by GAY WAKEFIELD, B.A.

The children in our school come from as far away as Liverpool, hence a few infiltrations, such as *lah* " lad ". Most of them live in Ashton itself; Billinge; Golborne; Bryn; Haydock; Newton-le-Willows and Wigan. One of the reasons for the survival of the dialect and the coining even of new dialect words, could be the close-knit community of Ashton, which is similar in culture to a Welsh mining village. Even though the mining industry is declining the people are the same. Choirs and silver bands, Labour Club outings, " village " beauty queens etc., abound. This means that the children and adults mix more readily than in some areas, and the proportion of young people returning to the area to work after further education at universities and colleges is very high. I have met—through teaching—several who have been to southern universities, and returned completely unaffected in their accent by the three or four years' absence. When talking to their " own kind " they resort to " thee " and " tha' dust " etc., omitting " superfluous " prepositions such as " to " and conjunctions such as " and ". For example, where we might say (with no particular virtue): " I'm going down into Ashton " the children would say: " *I'm going Ashton* ". They tend to be people of few words and almost shy at expressing themselves. Asked to explain his late arrival in class to me one morning, a boy said simply: " *buz wuz late* " (the bus was late).

I have included other idioms, some of which I recognise as slang, in my list, along with a list of words, some of which are no doubt in the *Dialect Dictionary*, but are interesting as living examples from the *Dictionary*: *lile* with the meaning " long ", *mard* " soft ", *teet* " mean " or " mingy ", *ben*, *ackers*, *clink*, *dosh* " money ", *moggy* insect rather than a cat. It can also mean any creeping thing and is extended to a metaphor in cricket, *to bowl a moggy* " to bowl a grubber "—a ball which does not bounce off the ground so that the batsman can hit it. *Mog off* " go away ", *moggied off* " gone away ", *drop*, *bounce*, *duff* to " set about someone " or " beat someone up " are also found. *Fiendish tunnel*—under a road—is extended from the " glass funnel " meaning of the chemistry laboratory. *Suckered* " made a fool of " shows an interesting use of *sucker* as a verb. Other expressions are *tekin boggats* " rearing up in surprise or alarm ", *sponner* " super, great, fat ", *geya* " very recent ", *last no good*, used particularly of a person who is " beyond hope in his behaviour ", *binge* " spend ", *rhyme on about* " go on about ", " harp on one topic ", *Motherpurse* is an interesting combination of " mother " and " purse ", neatly compressing the idea of " a purse

like my mother would have containing compartments for pound notes " into one word. There are various expressions for " left handed ": *cuddywifted*, *scrutchy*, *scrammy*, *rammy*, *cack-handed*, *checkerbent* (Westhoughton), *kaypored* (*-pawed*) (Haydock). *Cuddy* in Cumberland is apparently slang for " donkey " or " cart horse ". Could the idea of " clumsy " and " stupid " have affected the use of *cuddy* in *cuddywifted*? Various expressions which may also be noted are *garrets and parrots* " stairs ", *yed warch*, *belly warch* " head-ache ", " belly-ache ", *tallypow* " telegraph pole ", *fuzz buz* " police van ", *skewwift* " not straight ", *childer* " children ", *wint* (Scots. *wynd*) " snicket ".

Interesting idioms include: *What 'ave a for't do?* " What should I do? ", and *He's called read in Assembly, so he's not come.* " He had to read in Assembly, so he is absent ". (*Come* is always used instead of " present ", *not come* for " absent ".) *I'm called go: pictures* means " I've promised or arranged to go to the pictures ". Sometimes *called* carries the meaning of being asked to do something, but being prevented.

Three locally popular place-names are also worth noting: *Owd Lump* " Bryn Gates ", *Yickville* " Haydock " and *Yickers* " Haydockians ".

I don't know if this joke is widespread, but it is an interesting example of the living dialect in children and of misunderstandings which can arise when dialect and Standard English run side by side: teacher to child (on seeing him drop litter in the playground) " Where's the bin? ". Child: "A's bin toilet miss ". This actually happened to one of the teachers in our school.

AN APPEAL

We have had a letter from Miss P. Irwin, a student who is anxious to make a collection of " Lancashire recipes and stories connected with eating that are either funny or concerned with Lancashire traditions ". If any members can help her, please would they write to her at 4, Bentley Road, Liverpool 8?

MI OUZEL

by EDITH COLLISON

Tha couldno' tell as Ah wur sad
When fost tha landed theer
Mi ouzel, come to mek me glad.
He mun ha' sent thee here.

Ah watched thi coortin', back in t' spring,
Sa peart an' fause to see.
Thi 'ticin' song two hearts to wring,
Aye, mine, an' hers on t' tree.

Tha's bin on t' go beawt time to bide,
Ah'm fain tha'rt i' thi prime,
Fer t' little nebs are oppen wide,
An' tha's a pushin' time.

Tha's flung thi notes, an' flashed thi wings,
An' what's tha browt fer me?
Ah've joy i' every song tha sings,
An' thanks to Him fer thee.

An' when tha's ta'en thi brood away
Reet lonesome Ah'll be then.
Wilt come back, love? Come onny day,
An' start aw o'er agen.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

The annual subscription, due on January 1st, is fifty pence. The life membership fee is ten pounds fifty pence. Subscriptions should be sent to the Hon. Treasurer, Professor G. L. Brook, at the Department of English, The University, Manchester, M13 9PL.

REVIEW

Robert Roberts, *The Classic Slum: Salford Life in the First Quarter of the Century*. Manchester University Press, 1971. £2·64.

This is not a comfortable book, nor is it intended to be. Mr. Roberts re-creates with detached passion, and with deep compassion, the conditions of life in Salford until comparatively recent times. He does not write as an outsider; his book is firmly based on recollections of his own upbringing in the heart of central Salford. He shows no trace of sentimentality for the past. This is made clear, for example, when he says: " In general, slum life was far from being the jolly hive of communal activity that some romantics have claimed " (p. 32).

He has a gift for precision of phrase and detail. He notes, for example, the rarely-remarked local use of " sand-bone men " for " rag and bone men " (p. 22). The conversations which he overheard in his mother's shop are recorded with a keen ear. His stark description of one of the effects of the dockers' strike on his own intimate community brings gooseflesh to the skin: "A child, standing terrified by the door, I saw an officer lean forward on his horse and hit a neighbour with his truncheon above the eyes, heard the blow like the thump of wood on a swede turnip " (p. 71).

Any Salfordian who grew up before the second World War will recognise and respect the authenticity of Mr. Roberts's account. The plates which illustrate the book are equally authentic. They are photographs taken in the early years of the century by a Worsley man who hid his purpose by the pleasing subterfuge of concealing his camera under a pile of rags on a junk-cart. The dust-jacket provides a reproduction of L. S. Lowry's " View from a window of the Royal Technical College, Salford, 1924 ". This makes an excellent cover for an excellent book.

S.B.

Lancashire Dialect Society

Statement of Receipts and Payments for the year ending December 31st, 1970

Receipts	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Subscriptions:		
Arrears		6 10 0
Current		67 7 10
Paid in Advance		5 0 0
Donations		3 5 0
Sale of Journal		3 15 0
Building Society Interest		8 19 2
Balance December 31st, 1969:		
Barclays Bank Ltd.	6 8 10	
Bradford & Bingley Building Society	177 0 7	
Cash in hand	50 2 1	
		233 11 6
		328 8 6

Payments	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Printing of Journal		86 0 0
Postage		7 17 2
Stationery		7 11 9
Expenses of Meetings		17 10 2
Bank Charges		3 0
Balance, December 31st, 1970:		
Barclays Bank Ltd.	21 5 5	
Bradford & Bingley Building Society	185 19 9	
Cash in hand	2 1 3	
		209 6 5
		328 8 6

Audited and found correct,
S. ROBERTS,
May 4th, 1971.

G. L. BROOK, *Hon. Treasurer*
Department of English
The University, Manchester M13 9PL

Lancashire Dialect Society

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